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American Consulate General,
Munich, Germany,
April 29, 1958.

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Dear Mr. Curtis:

STATOTHR

Thank you very much for your informative letter of April 8 regarding the [] case.

STATOTHR

I must say, however, that I was somewhat surprised to learn from your letter that certain military authorities in Washington interpreted my letter to Major General Watson as a request for the commitment of [] Certainly, I and my staff clearly understood that we had no authority to commit an American citizen. This act, we fully realized, was a legal function of a court or of the appropriate local authorities. This is still our understanding.

STATOTHR

The [] case differed from other Protection and Welfare cases which have been handled by this office only in that the Director of Radio Free Europe, a very important American establishment in Munich, was personally interested in the case and sought my urgent assistance. I communicated with the Commanding General of the local army command instead of with the officer of the day or the chief surgeon of the military hospital. It is the policy of the local military hospital, and I would assume of all military as well as civilian hospitals, to admit or treat persons, civilian as well as military, in cases of emergency to save lives or prevent undue suffering. I have always found our local military authorities most helpful and cooperative in cases of this kind - for example, sometime ago they admitted, at the request of this office, a young Smith College student, stricken with polio, evacuated her immediately for the United States and possibly saved her life.

I am glad you agree with me that in my letter to General Watson I was asking assistance in a case I had reason to believe was rather a serious emergency. I was doing nothing more than facilitating medical attention to the degree necessary and in no way was attempting to exercise any authority, which I knew I did not possess,

Edward Glion Curtis, Esquire,
Department of State,
Washington, D. C.

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of commitment. I realized, after a careful review of all the factors of this case, that there might be serious consequences which might later require the forceful commitment by appropriate authorities; however, this was not necessary as [] I was informed, went to the hospital voluntarily. After arranging for the required medical attention which I had been informed by Radio Free Europe was most urgent and which in effect was voluntarily received, I felt that I had discharged my duties. The type and degree of hospitalization and treatment, if any were necessary, were of course in the hands of the competent trained medical authorities over which I naturally could have no influence, nor did I attempt to assert any.

Sincerely,

Edward Page, Jr.

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